

PROPOSED CITY/COUNTY GREENSPACE PLAN

City of Bloomington

December 1999

By

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project is to provide a framework for the Greenspace Plan set forth as a future goal by both the City of Bloomington and Monroe County. In an effort to preserve what greenspace and open space remains within the boundaries of the City and County, a cooperative City-County Greenspace Task Force should be formed. Based on the goals and objectives defined as a part of this proposed framework, the Task Force will identify targets areas and establish mechanisms to acquire and maintain land. The information provided herein, is the result of a thorough investigation, conducted in cooperation with the City of Bloomington Planning Department and the Lilly Community Assistance Fellowship Program at Indiana University.

SECTION I PURPOSE

As the City of Bloomington expands further toward its boundaries each year, we lose the opportunity to preserve what greenspace remains as long as an active plan is not in place. As communities around the United States begin to come to terms with the loss of greenspace in their local areas, more and more referendums are making their way onto ballots. In November of 1998, voters faced 240 state and local ballot measures aimed at land conservation, parks, and smart growth. An astounding 72 percent of these items passed, resulting in more than \$7.5 billion in state and local funds set aside to preserve greenspace (Lerner 15).

In its efforts to develop a comprehensive Greenspace Plan, the city must address the fundamental questions that underlie its motives: Why do we want to preserve land? How will we identify land to preserve as greenspace? And how will we actually acquire that land?

Through the steps listed in the Initial Project Scope (Appendix A), these questions will slowly be answered. The city must look to defining its plan in terms of its final objectives. Is it to take a proactive role in the acquisition of land, serving as a coordinator of efforts to compile greenspace under singular ownership, or is it to take a passive view by simply cataloging, through a master list of a landowner network, greenspaces as they are created or set aside?

When these questions are answered, a “greenspace system” will emerge. Greenspaces will be targeted in a manner that will allow them to be interconnected in a large network throughout Bloomington and Monroe County.

ESTABLISHING GOALS

The first step in addressing all of the above questions is to establish clear goals for the Greenspace Plan. With the county and other interested parties, the City of Bloomington must clearly and specifically define what it hopes to gain from the implementation of such a Plan. What benefits do they hope to achieve for the community and its residents? What resources are they willing to commit to the project? Who will be involved from planning steps to implementation and monitoring steps?

Charles A. Flink and Robert M. Searns¹ suggest that a minimum of five goals be considered when examining possibilities for greenway corridors; these goals transfer quite readily to the establishment of a greenspace system:

1. *Human Goals.* Who should use the greenspace system and for what purposes? Who will be affected? How should the greenspace system be developed to accommodate stated needs?
2. *Environmental Goals.* How should the greenspace system protect and enhance water, vegetation, wildlife, air, and other natural resources and ecological systems?

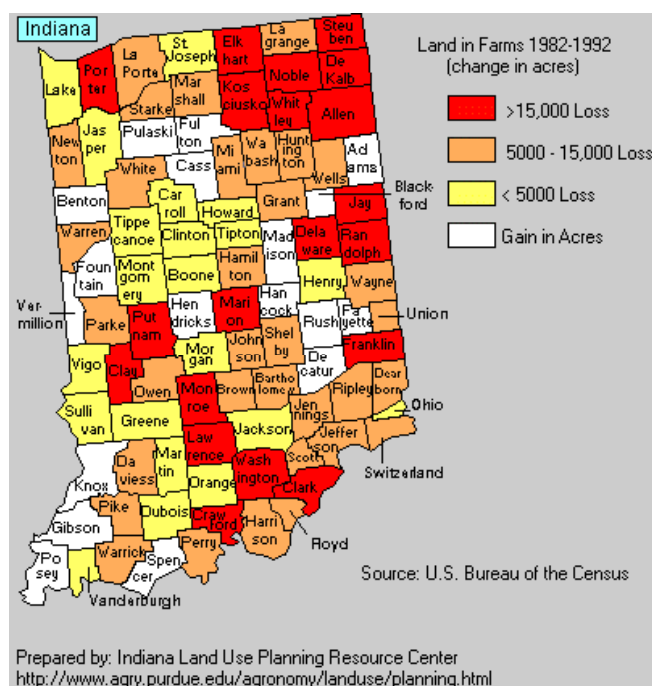
¹ In *Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development*. Loring LaB. Schwarz, ed. Washington: Island Press, 1993.

3. *Implementation Goals.* Who should implement the greenspace system? A public agency or a private organization? Will implementation require action and cooperation among multiple agencies? Will it require special joint powers or other agreements that would create a new special-interest entity? This may all depend on who owns or has jurisdiction over the land the greenspace system traverses.
4. *Long-term Management Goals.* Who will manage the greenspace system after it has been developed? What level of management will be required?
5. *Economic Goals.* How much money will be needed to develop and maintain the greenspace system? What type of financial resources are likely to be available from federal, state, local, and private resources? What economic benefits will the completed greenway bring and to whom?

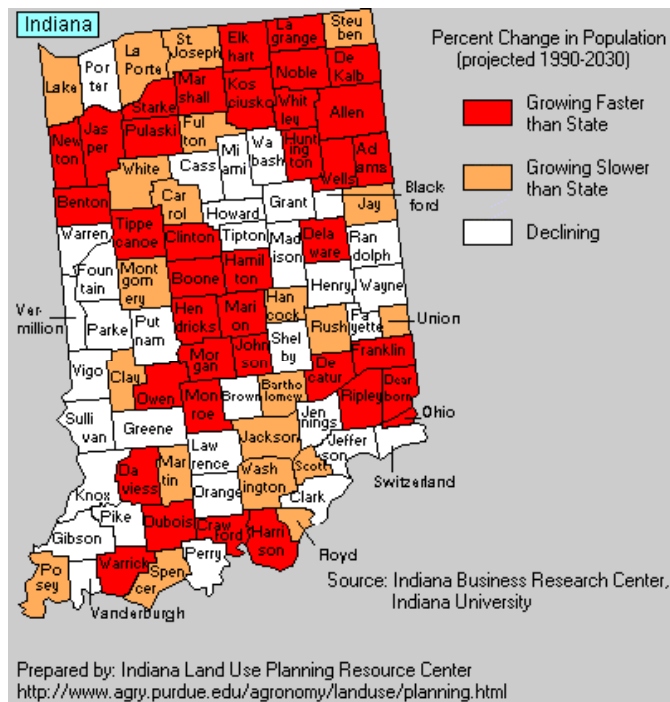
RECOGNIZING LOCAL NEED

In the early 1990s, the City of Bloomington recognized that there was reason to preserve greenspace within the city and county. Under Mayor Allison, the Environmental Commission headed two or three different efforts to catalog greenspaces and gauge resident reaction. In going through EC records, however, no final reports were to be found, even though references are specifically made to such reports in what material was uncovered. What limited materials that do exist reveal, is that the EC took many of the steps outlined in this draft in the past, but the findings of their research efforts were never acted upon.

By all indications, Monroe County is experiencing a loss of vital greenspace. According to the US Bureau of the Census, Monroe County experienced a rapid rate of farm loss between 1982 and 1992. The following map illustrates this point and reveals that the vast majority of Indiana counties also experienced a loss of land:



In all likelihood, farmland loss has been the result of increased development. As Monroe County's population continues to grow, development pressure will continue to increase. The Indiana Business Research Center predicts that population growth between 1990 and 2030 will persist at a rate greater than the state average. The end result is that Monroe County farmland will continue to disappear at an alarming rate. Predicted state population changes by county are shown in this map:



REACTING TO CITIZEN SUPPORT

Nationwide, support for protecting greenspace is soaring. According to a July 1999 independent survey,² a full two-thirds of Americans polled support the use of public funds to acquire greenspace. Not only are Americans supportive of using government funds to purchase and protect land, but most say they are willing to pay more taxes so governments can afford to make such a purchase. A majority (51% willing, 39% unwilling) are willing to pay \$18 more a year in taxes “in order to purchase and protect parks, open space, and natural lands” in their community. Willingness to pay increases as the amount of the tax hike decreases (\$12 a year: 56% willing, 35% unwilling; \$6 a year: 61% willing, 32% unwilling).

Locally, Bloomington residents maintain an interest in preserving greenspace. In a fall 1999 willingness to pay survey,³ 50% of respondents reported that they would be willing to pay a monthly rate for greenspace, in the form of an increase in property tax, for example. While official results of the survey were labeled economically irrational,⁴ of the 50% of respondents willing to pay, a large grouping were willing to pay around \$1 per month, while a similarly large grouping were willing to pay around \$25 per month. In a survey of greenspace issues conducted

² By the Mellman Group and American Viewpoint for the Trust for Public Land.

³ By a SPEA cohort group as a part of their project on Bloomington greenspace.

⁴ By SPEA professor David Goode due to the bipolar distribution of the respondent data.

around 1990, citizen support was also strong, with 88.7% agreeing that new development should take fewer existing trees. Additionally, 87% of respondents felt that more greenspace should be included as a part of new development. Even though people generally felt that their part of town had sufficient greenspace, 75.3% agreed that the city should acquire land for passive recreation use (“Environmental”).

RECRUITING PARTNERSHIPS

To continue addressing greenspace issues in Bloomington, the city will be required to form partnerships with other interested parties. Clearly, the county has an equal interest in setting the an active Greenspace Plan in motion. Beyond government involvement, a number of other players will need to take part in the comprehensive planning to be conducted, as well as the actual acquisition, identification, and inventorying of land. Section II will discuss in more detail the parties with whom the city and county will be working toward the Greenspace Plan.

COMPLETING THE PROCESS

As the city proceeds with the formation of a task force in their endeavor to compile the Greenspace Plan, staff will need to ask themselves a number of questions regarding the community’s ability to manage growth in a way that would accomplish greenspace goals. The following questions, formulated by the Natural Lands Trust (Arendt, “Conservation”), are meant to identify areas that a community will need to focus on:

1. *The Community Resource Inventory.* Has the community adequately inventoried its resources, and does the public have a sufficient understanding and appreciation of them?
2. *The “Community Audit.”* Is the community monitoring and assessing its likely future under its current growth management practices, and is it taking steps to change what it does not like?
3. *Policies for Conservation and Development.* Has the community established appropriate and realistic policies for land conservation and development, and do these policies produce a clear vision of lands to be conserved?
4. *The Regulatory Framework.* Do the community’s zoning and subdivision regulations reflect and encourage its policies for land conservation and development?
5. *Designing Conservation Subdivisions.* Does the community know how to work cooperatively and effectively with subdivision applicants?
6. *Working Relationships with Landowners.* Does the community have a good understanding of working relationships with its major landowners?
7. *Stewardship of Conservation Lands.* Does the community have in place the arrangements required for successfully owning, managing, and using land set aside for conservation purposes?
8. *Ongoing Education and Communications.* How are local officials and the general public maintaining their knowledge of the state-of-the-art in managing growth to conserve land?

SECTION II

TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

To accomplish the desired goals and objectives of a comprehensive greenspace plan, the City of Bloomington will need to coordinate its efforts with a number of key players with a vested interest in seeing the plan become a success. To this end, a task force will need to be created, involving as many of the interested parties as is feasible for good decision-making. Membership in this task force will be subject to the selection of city and county officials, but primary contacts could be considered as the following:

- City of Bloomington – Together with the county, the City of Bloomington has taken the lead on the formulation of the Greenspace Plan. Understandably, much of the planning requires reconciliation of desired goals with current regulations and projections for future development. The city must be careful to strike a balance between preserving greenspace for the good of the city and its residents and allowing development to occur at a natural rate so as not to abridge any liberties.

Incorporating the Greenspace Plan into the Growth Policies Plan during the next update is a goal held by the city. While the GPP currently references greenspace in a number of locations, there is no direct plan in place for the active preservation of greenspace. Around 1990, an inventory was made of references to greenspace within the Master Plan; part of this draft plan was to undertake a survey of greenspace references in the current GPP, but time did not allow for that task to be completed. See Appendix B for the summary prepared in 1990.j

The Environmental Commission will also play a major advisory role throughout this process. Based on the EC's prior efforts to initiate a greenspace preservation strategy, they would like to maintain a very active role.

- Monroe County – The idea for a city-/county-wide greenspace initiative was presented by County Commissioner Mark Stoops in September of 1999. The text of his draft is printed in Appendix C. The county has a sincere interest in the adoption of such an initiative as well and has already enacted some regulatory revisions as progressive steps toward that end. Like the City, county staff and officials must ensure they maintain a balance between development and preservation.

Recent county proposals introduced measures to improve the county's ability to preserve open space in future developments. While the county has a clustering option that grants a 15% density bonus, one proposal would increase that density bonus to 50% in non-industrial/business zones. Another would double Agricultural/Rural minimum lot sizes from 2.5 to 5 acres, and Forest minimum lot sizes from 5 to 10 acres. Finally, in a third proposal, PUD regulations would be revised so that mandatory open space must be contiguous and not the result of combining open spaces on individual lots.

- Not-for-Profit Organizations – The Sycamore Land Trust has shown a significant interest in wanting to be a part of the Greenspace Plan. While their specific role is yet to be determined, it is likely they would not choose to coordinate the acquisition of property.

Not all lands acquired would meet the criteria they have designated for their purposes, and they do not have the resources (manpower or funds) to act as steward to the lands the city and county hope to preserve. The Sycamore Land Trust will no doubt have membership on the task force, but other roles will be determined as the task force better defines the goals and roles associated with the Greenspace Plan.

Other not-for-profit organizations will be identified and invited to participate as seen necessary by the initiators of the plan. Roles for each participating not-for-profit will need to be defined: which will exist as land trusts, which as coordinators for portions of the Plan, which as watch dogs over designated properties, and which as advisors throughout the course of Plan implementation? For the purposes of applying for grants, partnerships may be established with various not-for-profits. Additionally, it is Stoops' vision that a not-for-profit organization be established for the sole purpose of seeing the Greenspace Plan through to completion and administering it throughout its life span.

This not-for-profit could be formed as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and would be eligible to accept donations of land and funds, apply for grants for which only tax-exempt not-for-profits are eligible, and hold title to land as if it were a land trust. By creating a not-for-profit organization that is separate from government and any elected or appointed officials, the Greenspace Plan would remain non-political and would more easily survive the transition from administration to administration in the years to come.

Lexington, Kentucky, in setting up their Greenspace Plan, created not only a separate entity but also a not-for-profit associated with the Urban County Government. This advisory board was known as the "Greenspace Stewardship Fund" and would direct the usage of funds available for greenspace acquisition, whether budget allocations, grant proceeds, or bond proceeds. The Fund was granted authority to hold title to easements or properties and was delegated responsibilities for enforcement. This not-for-profit remained under the auspices of the Mayor and Urban County Council. It is up to Bloomington and Monroe County and the purveyors of their plan as to whether a second, government-related organization should be created. Depending on current practices and political climate, this may or may not be a good idea.

- Park & Recreation – The Parks & Recreation authorities of the city and county would be called upon to take part in planning in some capacity. Ideally, they would be involved in the overall strategy formation, as great deal of the current greenspace, for the city at least, is held as parkland. Steve Cotter, Natural Resources Coordinator for the city, maintains an active interest in the Greenspace Plan and served as a useful resource for information included in this project. Parks & Rec would be involved not only in planning, but also in acquisition of land, grant applications (for grants that are only for parks boards or that require partnerships), and monitoring and upkeep of the greenspace system.
- Others – Other entities would also become involved with the Greenspace Plan as needed. Indiana University, for example, has an abundance of greenspaces located throughout its campus. The Arboretum is only one excellent example. The task force would likely include representatives from the University, and would also work with University planners to preserve as much of the current greenspace as possible.

Others represented might include the Indiana Biodiversity Initiative, The Nature Conservancy, private developers, citizens groups, public agencies, and concerned residents.

Additionally, adjacent counties would need to play at the very least a passive, supportive role throughout this initiative. Because many of Monroe County's resources (forests, water bodies, etc.) do not recognize county lines, officials from adjacent counties should be brought into the planning process so that they are at least aware of what Bloomington and Monroe County are proposing. Eventually, this effort could (and should) become a regional planning mechanism to best preserve the natural integrity of Southeast Indiana.

For this task force to successfully organize and promote the Greenspace Plan, they need to have a solid goal to work toward. They need to be granted authority to investigate all avenues en route to seeing the Plan materialize and remain functional. Group members will need to focus on what they want out of the plan in addition to the goals and objectives prescribed by city and county staff members, also on the task force. Once collective goals are established, the task force can decide what their next steps will be, whether to pursue grant funding, begin strategic planning, or focus on accurately mapping greenspace resources.

SECTION III IDENTIFICATION OF GREENSPACE

GREENSPACE DEFINED

In defining greenspace for the city's purposes, staff need to ensure that all potential classifications of greenspace are taken into consideration in order to form a "big picture." Once an overview of the city's greenspace needs is understood, a comprehensive and specific definition should be composed to align with the goals discussed in Section I, and to agree with the missions of both the Environmental Commission and Monroe County.

Greenspace should be identified within the city and county based on the various factors often associated with environment and wildlife conservation, pedestrian travel and recreation, and aesthetic value. Primary features are those assets that directly contribute to the natural greenspace environment. Examples to be identified include the following:

- Karst features, such as caves and sinkholes
- Tree cover
- Sensitive soil types (easily eroded)
- Wetlands
- Steep slopes (>18% grade)
- Streams
- Floodplain

Secondary features are those characteristics that identify a parcel beyond its natural greenspace but that, by their nature, tend to indicate the presence of greenspace. The following are examples relevant to the city's plan:

- Parks
- Conservation easements held by city
- Sycamore Land Trust properties
- Historic areas
- Farmland
- Cemeteries

Additionally, greenway areas are to be included as a part of the comprehensive planning process for the greenspace plan and will contribute greatly to the idea of a "greenspace system."

According to the National Park Service, five miles of trail should be established at a minimum for each 10,000 inhabitants in a metropolitan area (Arendt, *Rural* 266). It becomes necessary, then, to identify those areas most readily integrated into the greenspace system that may provide excellent greenway opportunities for pedestrian recreation and transportation, as well as pedestrian interaction with the various parcels that comprise the greenspace system. Identifiable opportunities include:

- Bike paths
- Walking trails

- Scenic roads
- Rural road remnants
- Undeveloped rights-of-way
- Abandoned rail corridors
- Utility easements

Wildlife connectivity is also important between greenspaces that will be maintained at or near their natural state. Possible linkages include:

- Existing wildlife corridors
- Riparian buffers
- Natural topography

GREENSPACE IDENTIFIED

Two main steps are in order to appropriately identify greenspace as required for the city's underlying purposes in establishing this plan with the county.

1. Greenspace characteristics must be identified throughout the city and county, and high-quality maps showing the locations of these characteristics must be produced, and
2. Criteria must be established to evaluate greenspace areas for acquisition potential based on the presence of the features mapped in step one.

GIS Mapping Process

Overlay maps are to be composed on GIS software for each of the identifiable greenspace features mentioned above. This process will be a time-consuming one, and will only proceed as quickly as the city can create maps using available capabilities, integrate data from other sources, and coordinate efforts with the county.

Completing individual overlay maps detailing each of the following will be necessary in order to achieve a comprehensive greenspace map for the city and county:

- Karst features
- Tree cover
- Soils
- Wetlands
- Steep slopes
- Streams/Floodplains
- Parks
- Pathways
- Conservation easements
- Large city- and county-owned properties
- Historic areas/Cemeteries
- Farmland

A timeline for completion of the above maps is yet to be established. City staff should identify priorities and proceed as necessary to complete these maps. Predictions estimate that, at the earliest, mapping could be completed by May of 2000.

In order to achieve a comprehensive greenspace map, that is both accurate and complete, coordination with the county will be required. Reconciliation of two different mapping systems presents the greatest challenge, and some of the above maps require data that the county does not have.

Courtney Hadly, 1999-2000 research intern for the Environmental Commission, has taken on the responsibility of coordinating GIS mapping efforts as a part of this sizeable greenspace effort. Her progress is summarized below, and complements the general information above, which addresses the intentions found in the original plan.

The first step in creating these overlays is to obtain the data so that it can be put into GIS. The main GIS contact for this project is Laura Haley, one of the city's GIS coordinators. She helped to identify the data that is needed to complete the overlays, as well as providing technical expertise with GIS.

The city's GIS office has most of the data needed for the city, but is lacking information for the county. The first step is to obtain the contour data for the county that will form the base of the greenspace map. This information will be obtained from the Indiana Geological Survey (IGS) through Paul Irwin (GIS and Database systems analyst).

Another challenge will be delineating karst features using GIS. Two members of the IGS, Edwin Hartke, Section Head for Environmental Geology, and Denver Harper, Geologist and GIS Analyst for Environmental Geology, have set up a meeting. . .with several other members from IGS to discuss this complicated issue.

There are several other pieces of information that have yet to be obtained. The city has tree cover information, but it must be digitized so that it is in the format required by the GIS system. Data on the locations of the various land trusts/conservation easements as well as historical sites in the area also needs to be obtained. (Hadly)

Evaluation Criteria

In the early 90s, the Environmental Commission, with assistance from SPEA interns, began an inventory and analysis of Bloomington's available greenspace. A final report apparently was composed and presented to the Environmental Commission, but all evidence of this report is unavailable except for a short summary in "The 1992 Annual Report" by the EC to the Mayor (Werner 3). Of course, since 1988 aeriels were used for this process, data they compiled is inadequate. Efforts from either this project or another at or around the same time did, however, yield a draft of a property analysis form to be used in rating and ranking parcels for potential incorporation into a greenspace system. It is unknown whether this document was produced in final form or used for any purposes. A copy can be found in Appendix D.

Based on current priorities, the city is charged with establishing relevant criteria in light of goals set by all involved organizations. The following areas need to be addressed within these criteria as staff members see fit. Models of questionnaires and evaluation forms addressing similar criteria can be found in Appendix E. Incorporating priorities based on analysis of the following criteria, the city should formulate its own property guidelines:

- **Presence of Primary Features** – As the primary identifier of greenspace, primary features are the main concern in the identification of greenspace opportunities. Those areas that maintain their most natural features are best preserved in perpetuity as green areas. While some areas will likely remain in their natural state for the sole purpose of greenspace preservation, other green areas that have previously been altered (e.g., by having trees removed or sinkholes filled) may be better suited for becoming parks or recreational areas. Primary features should be given priority during site assessment and used to differentiate potential greenspace land uses.
- **Presence of Secondary Features** – Secondary features will often complement the natural greenspace areas, and may even contribute wholly to the green or open nature of a site. Secondary features should be taken into consideration along with primary features as a part of the overall greenspace assessment. Alone, secondary features may not indicate a prime greenspace area, but their presence may improve the aesthetics or overall worth of a site with primary features.
- **Likelihood of Future Development** – Because the city is concerned that future development will wipe out all remaining greenspace unless action is taken now, part of the prioritization process should involve assessing the risk of future development for each site being considered. Available funds would be best spent on sites that may be sold for development within the next year. A continuum should be established, listing all parcels up for consideration according to how soon they may be up for sale. Predicting future city growth patterns based on development proposals in progress and already approved, as well as asking landowners, could help supply this information.
- **Corridor Opportunities** – In order to contribute most effectively to the city's greenspace system, a property should be easily linked to existing greenspaces or to projected acquisitions, or easily connected by a greenway infrastructure. The more readily incorporated as a part of a system, rather than as a stand-alone property, the more weight the property could be given. The city would need to consider long-term goals when evaluating corridor opportunities. Additionally, since a pathways plan already exists, whereby developments overlapping the proposed pathways are required to allow that pathway as a part of their development, this planned network could be extended to include all future projected greenspace sites. The input of Bloomington or IU running and biking clubs could also be solicited to identify scenic paths not a part of any plan.
- **Availability of Funds** – Because outright purchase of land is only one option for creating or acquiring greenspace, the availability of funds, whether through the annual budget or obtained from financing or grant sources, should be an important consideration. Properties that are financially out of reach may seem enticing, but if purchasing that property means letting other important greenspace areas slip away during the time it takes

to save funds or acquire finances, then it may not be worth the wait to purchase even the most spectacular properties.

- **Applicability of Zoning Revisions** – As one opportunity to preserve greenspace, the revision of zoning and other regulatory means may be initiated by the city. (See Section IV for more on this topic.) If a property may be partially preserved as it is developed according to new or revised regulations, then an expenditure of funds may not be necessary to effectively preserve the greenspace features of that property. Since zoning revisions may be a long-term solution, they should be taken into consideration as a part of the overall strategic plan.
- **Coordination with Land Trusts** – Since land trusts (specifically the Sycamore Land Trust) have more restrictive guidelines for land that they will accept for acquisition, they should be offered an opportunity—through their involvement with this project—to review each potential greenspace site. Those they deem acceptable, and for which they can acquire funds, should be adopted into their easement collection and not be considered for purchase by the city.
- **Grant Eligibility** – Specific sites may be eligible for certain grants, whereas other sites would not be eligible. A number of grant opportunities, for example, apply only to farmland or require that obtaining the site be part of a measure to improve water quality in the local area. All grant opportunities should be investigated as time and resources (and available local matching) all, but grants should not be relied upon as the sole revenue source to fund greenspace acquisition and preservation.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TARGET SITES

In order to create a comprehensive greenspace system, networked by corridors and greenways, a strategic plan will need to be developed by city staff. Using GIS overlay maps, individual potential sites should be identified based on the presence of greenspace features. Then, using the above criteria, assessments of individual sites should rate priority parcels and compare them to the goals of the greenspace plan relative to available funding and alternative means of acquisition.

Once target sites are identified, mechanisms described in Section IV and educational efforts detailed in Section VII should be combined to integrate properties into the city greenspace system.

SECTION IV MECHANISMS FOR ESTABLISHING GREENSPACE

LAND PURCHASE PROGRAMS

Land Purchase Programs are methods by which the City of Bloomington⁵ can actively acquire ownership or ownership interest in land through a direct expenditure of funds. Direct purchase will require funding through available sources, possibly the city budget, long-term financing, or grant opportunities.

- **Fee Simple Purchase** – Acquisition of land in fee simple gives the purchaser full title to and possession of all rights associated with the purchased property, subject only to the constraints imposed by nuisance laws and valid public regulations, including zoning and subdivision. Fee simple ownership provides the simplest and most effective means of implementing greenspace because the government owns the land and controls its development, redevelopment, preservation, and access (Duerksen 42).
- **Bargain Sale** – Acquisition of land through bargain sale can occur when a landowner offers a parcel for sale at less than fair market value to the city or other purchasing agency. Bargain sales occur less frequently than full-price sales, and would be likely only in a situation when landowners are more concerned about preserving the land in perpetuity than making a large profit from the sale (Munich 3-4)..
- **Installment Purchase Agreement (IPA)** – IPAs spread out payments so that landowners receive semi-annual, tax-exempt interest over a term of years (typically 20 to 30). The principal is then due at the end of the contract term. Landowners also can sell or securitize IPA contracts at any point to realize the outstanding principal. The day before the settlement, the city would set the rate for the interest to be paid to the IPA holder (American).
- **Acquisition of Undivided Interest** – As an alternative to sole ownership, purchasing a percentage of ownership provides the organization with a legal interest in the management of the property (Munich 4).
- **Integration into Parks Purchase Program** – Working in conjunction with the City of Bloomington’s Parks and Recreation Department, it may be possible to expand the current purchase program to include the acquisition of important greenspaces by amending the list of eligible types of land and criteria for the selection of habitat lands. In many cases, this expansion would be consistent with the intent of the existing program and would not require the creation and funding of an open space program specifically designed for greenspace purposes (Duerksen 43).
- **Purchase and Sellback** – Once the city owns the land, does not necessarily need to retain ownership in all aspects of the land. It can use its position as the owner of the land to facilitate the rezoning of the land or to impose negative easements, deed restrictions, or development agreement, and then resell the land to a third party.
- **Purchase and Leaseback** – Similar to a sellback, the city could purchase the property and then lease it to a third party subject to conditions and restrictions as provided in the lease (Duerksen 44).

⁵ “City” or “City of Bloomington” are used generically throughout this document to represent any party determined in the future to hold authority to acquire land or regulate land use as an agent of the City-County Greenspace Plan.

- **Purchase “Triggers”** – The city may not need to purchase a certain property at all until an alternative use or sale of the land is contemplated. Purchase “triggers” apply the basic concept for purchase options in real estate transactions—they provide a means for potential purchaser to “tie up” a property without actually buying it. One issue with purchase triggers is cost. Governments sometimes spend large amounts of money on buying rights to purchase and then another large sum to actually purchase the land. Another drawback is time-related; delaying purchase may allow for increased development pressures, which could then drive up the market value of the land being considered (Duerksen 44).
 - **Options** – By purchasing an option on property, a potential purchase reserves the exclusive right to purchase the property within a specified time period or in the event that certain events happen.
 - **Rights of First Refusal** – Here, the city pays for a first right to purchase a property if the property is to be sold. The buyer of a right of first refusal often does not need to negotiate a price in advance but is obligated to match a bone fide offer submitted by another potential purchaser. This avoids the difficulty of valuing greenspace now but does protect the seller against having to sell at a bargain price when there is a better offer from another potential buyer. Problems may arise in this case when exact figures are needed to be able to meet budget constraints or plan for funding cycles.
 - **“Sword of Damocles” Provision** – Such a provision can be implemented under the city’s power to condemn land. If the proposed use of lands or habitat or buffer zones meets the definition of a “public purpose,” the local government has the power to purchase the land through the eminent domain process. The government also has authority to agree not to use those powers as long as certain conditions are maintained.
- **Life Estates** – The city may be able to work toward its greenspace goals through the acquisition of life estates in important lands. When landowners are unwilling to grant easements or impose deed restrictions or covenants that would bind their children’s use and disposition of the land, the city may want to purchase a life estate in the land and lease the property back to the current owner at roughly the same cost. The terms of the transaction allow the government to control the use of the land during the owner’s lifetime but terminate that control at the time of the owner’s death. Even though the land could be put to incompatible use sometime in the future, the purchase of a life estate can buy time for the city to consider follow-up steps and/or raise money for eventual purchase of the property (Duerksen 45).

PRESERVATION WITHOUT DIRECT LAND OWNERSHIP

Programs in this category are opportunities for the city to obtain control of land use without actually purchasing the land. Public outreach and careful planning will contribute to the success of these programs.

- **Conservation Buyers Program** – In this type of program, the city would get involved at the transaction level, but would not actually purchase the land themselves (Chambers).
 - **Simple Program** – In a simple program, the city simply introduces conservation buyers (often land trust and conservation organization supporters) to the people who are selling land. Then the city stands back, and lets the buyers and sellers try to complete a deal. Conservation comes later, sometimes years after the sale, when the

- new owner donates a conservation easement. In the meantime, however, it is understood that the conservation buyer will preserve the land through compatible use.
- **Option Program** – In an option program, the city would negotiate with a seller for the option to buy, with conditions (e.g., final Board approval, clean report on Phase 1 environmental, clear title, surveying, etc.). Then, while these conditions are being addressed, the city would actively recruit a conservation buyer to purchase the land before any city money was expended toward purchase. Some sellers will resist this option technique as uncertain. The sellback program described in the previous section could then become an option.
 - **Conservation Easements** – Easements can be viewed as just a few of the bundle of rights that are included in fee simple ownership. The severable nature of easements allows a landowner to convey or reserve specific rights associated with a property apart from the right to possess and use the land in general. Through a legally binding agreement, positive easements grant someone else an affirmative right to the property (e.g. right of access), whereas negative easements restrict the actions of the owner (Duerksen 45).
 - **Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)** – PDRs are similar to conservation easements. Again, through a legally binding agreement, the city can control land development without buying the fee simple interest in the greenspace itself by paying landowners to forgo certain land development rights. A PDR program should be used when development pressures are not so strong as to inflate the values of development rights and when the residual values of the land remain profitable. The legality of this type of program in Indiana should be investigated further (Duerksen 45).

DONATION

While greenspace preservation is less likely to occur through donations than through other means, it should not be overlooked as an option. Working with not-for-profit organizations, the city can encourage donation of land by conservation-minded landowners. Benefits available from some of these methods may be exclusive to properties donated to not-for-profits. Additionally, those organizations may have authority in situations where the city lacks it.

- **Outright Donation** – Interested donor could be recruited from landowners known to be environmentally conscious. Inspection, maintenance, and management costs would be fully borne by the city after the time of donation.
- **Conservation Easements** – See above. Easements may also be donated by a landowner, also through a legally binding agreement.
- **Tax Incentives** – In conjunction with donations of land or conservation easements, tax incentives provide benefits to donors when the gift of property is made to a qualified, exempt not-for-profit organization and meets one of several tests for “conservation purposes” to be a “qualified conservation contribution” (Duerksen 42).
- **Land Trusts** – As part of the Greenspace Plan, land could be donated under the above conditions to a land trust. Currently, the Sycamore Land Trust operates in Bloomington and Monroe County. Land accepted by the land trust would need to meet their requirements in order for the organization to commit to stewardship. The city either could work to actively find Land Trust donors or could partner with the Sycamore Land Trust to coordinate greenspace preservation efforts. Additionally, the Land Trust could acquire land now for eventual purchase by the city. Land trusts can also acquire PDRs and easements and can take advantage of sellback or leaseback programs (Duerksen 48).

- **Land Banking** – Where state law allows them, land banks may be established by state or local governments with money derived through a real estate transfer tax. Easements or outright purchase could then be used to purchase land to take it out of the market for future development. Bloomington had established a large land bank in the early 1990s, but was forced to discontinue the concept when legal implications arose. The legality of land banks in Indiana needs to be considered (Munich 4).
- **Land Trades** – The city should consider whether the most cost-effective way to acquire greenspace may be to trade other lands owned by the city and no longer needed for their original purposes. Land parcels in or near developed areas, instead of being sold on the open market, could be traded for lands further away. In cases where the current owner of greenspace is holding it for future development, a potential trade for land nearer to established infrastructure and market demand may be very attractive. This type of program could also encourage infill development, described below (Duerksen 47).
- **Adopt-A-Greenspace Program** – At the neighborhood level, homeowners associations or neighborhood groups could be used as a resource, either to purchase vacant parcels of land or to preserve through easement land that is currently owned by residents. Charged with the authority to maintain this greenspace, the neighborhood would be able to reap the benefits of its ownership directly (Green, *How* 13).

ZONING

Zoning refers to the regulatory means by which the city can control development and development densities on land parcels within its jurisdiction. There are a number of ways by which the city can alter or make use of existing zoning codes to encourage or mandate the establishment of greenspace. The Planning Department will be charged with implementing policies of this nature through the appropriate channels.

- **Restrictive Zoning** – This type of zoning would be applied to current zoning standards to provide optimal preservation of greenspace.
 - **Large-lot Zoning** – Zoning ordinances that require larger than normal lot sizes have been applied by several communities in an effort to preserve open spaces and slow development. This type of zoning helps prevent the development of large tracts of open spaces and agricultural areas. Because the per-unit cost increases when housing in a development is spread out, the option of clustering (see below) can be used in conjunction with a density bonus, also below (Duerksen 36).
 - **Use Restriction Zoning** – Use restriction control the permitted uses on greenspace lands and surrounding areas. Most often used in the protection of animal habitat, through its listing of uses by right, conditional uses, and the criteria for approval of conditional uses, a zoning ordinance can prevent traffic-intensive or people-intensive activities from occurring close to prime areas. This approach allows applicants for conditional uses to move forward with their projects if they could design the sight and manage their operation in sensitive ways (Duerksen 32). (See also Development/Developer-Focused.)
 - **Existing Use Zoning** – Most notable for preserving agricultural land, existing use zoning can be used by a city to control where development can happen. Using a concept similar to Urban Growth Boundaries, a city that zoned something existing use would be doing so until it decided to "unzone" it at a later time for development (Arendt, *Rural* 293).

- **Density Restriction Zoning** – Minimum lot size requirements or maximum residential densities can be amended to reduce the number of people on sensitive land and the frequency of human interaction. Projects can be designed with a gradient of density away from more sensitive greenspace areas. These areas could have very low densities, and development further back could have correspondingly higher densities. Overall density can then remain the same (Duerksen 32).
- **Performance Zoning** – As an alternative to existing zoning, performance zoning regulates development primarily by limiting development impacts rather than densities or uses. Such an ordinance may target either a single type of impact (such as development of open space) or a broad range of impacts (to go a step further and protect specific land features). Developments that meet the set standards would be allowed regardless of whether they are residential, commercial, or industrial, but even low-density developments that fail to meet the standards would be prohibited. Sophisticated performance zoning ordinances may incorporate point systems whereby proposals are assigned point values for their ability to minimize a variety of impacts, and all proposals must achieve specified minimum scores (Duerksen 37).
- **Area Based Allocation Zoning (ABAZ)** – An approach generally used for agricultural land, ABAZ requires that homes be located on much smaller lots to avoid fragmentation of the resource base into “farmettes” of 5 to 40 acres. Under ABAZ, the number of houselots allowed would be directly proportional to the development’s total acreage (e.g., one lot for every 20 acres), but these lots would be subject to maximum size restrictions (often one acre), and may further be required to be located on the parts of the property that are least appropriate for greenspace. Current PRO standards apply this type of allocation (Arendt, *Rural* 296).
- **Sliding-Scale Zoning** – In this variation of ABAZ, a “sliding scale” is used wherein the number of potential dwellings increases at a slower rate as the farm tract increases in acreage. The rationale behind sliding-scale zoning is that smaller parcels are often less suited for long-term use outside of development. Current PRO standards apply this type of allocation (Arendt, *Rural* 296). The following table⁶ illustrates an example sliding scale:

**Dwelling Yield and Acreage Protected
Under Sliding-Scale Zoning**

Size of Tract (acres)	Dwellings Permitted by Ordinance	Analysis of Resulting Acres per Dwelling Unit
1 but less than 5	1	1.0 – 5.0
5 but less than 15	2	2.5 – 7.5
15 but less than 35	3	3.0 – 10.1
35 but less than 65	4	3.9 – 16.1
65 but less than 105	5	12.5 – 21.0
105 but less than 145	6	17.5 – 22.2
145 but less than 185	7	20.7 – 26.5
185 but less than 225	8	23.2 – 28.1

⁶ Randall Arendt. *Rural by Design* (Chicago: APA Planners Press, 1994) 297.

- **Rezoning/New Zoning Classifications** – New zoning classifications could be adopted to preserve greenspace and open spaces as well as their characteristic features.
 - **Greenspace Ordinance** – The city could enact a new subsection of text to existing zoning code addressing greenspace preservation and make new requirements applicable to all existing zone districts. A second option would be to draft similar protection language but to add the new requirements to only specific zone districts through amendments to those chapters of the code (Duerksen 32).
 - **Low-Density Agricultural Zoning** – This method has proven effective at preserving farmland, but could be transferred in principle to other areas. Such zoning would include a large minimum parcel size (often 160 acres or greater), the exclusion of all nonfarm land uses, and other restrictions such as limits on the number of building permits in the zone. With this large-lot zoning, once the allowable number of lots has been developed anywhere on the property, no more construction is allowed (Duerksen 36).
 - **Greenspace Zoning** – An entirely new zoning category could be created to designate land for greenspace uses. Rural scenic corridors and floodplain areas, for example, could be labeled with this designation. The question of the legality of this method in Bloomington requires further investigation (Lexington 52).
 - **Overlay Zoning** – Overlay zones are special zone districts that supplement, but do not replace, the basic zoning regulations applicable to a property. An overlay zone effectively eliminates the need to revise the regulations for each zoning district. Instead, it superimposes additional regulations specifically targeted to protect important physical characteristics of the land. A floodplain overlay zone, for example, would identify floodplain areas within a development, and additional requirements would be put in place for building on the overlay area (Duerksen 35).
- **Other Zoning-Related** – While not directly zoning, these items address areas where development could potentially be limited due to special designations.
 - **Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO)** – Implementation of an ordinance of this type would tie together the location and timing of development based on the availability of municipal services. New developments would only be approved where the infrastructure is capable of properly serving the proposed development. Infrastructure therefore leads development, rather than development leading infrastructure. The city has an APFO in place to direct higher intensity uses around the city’s edge (Indiana 7). Similarly, the city of Lexington, Kentucky, has an “urban services boundary” that prescribes the extent to which the city will expand urban infrastructure.
 - **Historic Districts** – Regulatory means could be put in place whereby any development in or near local, state, or national historic areas or structures would have to meet specific requirements. In rural portions of the city and county, these restrictions may have the added impact of preserving greenspace (Lexington 52).
 - **Nature Preserves Designation** – Land classified as nature preserves would be required to be held as greenspace until approved for other uses. This method may not be applicable to areas within Bloomington (Lexington 52).

DEVELOPMENT/DEVELOPER-FOCUSED

Methods listed below would apply during the planning phase of future developments within the city. The focus of these programs would be on appropriate density and development-to-

greenspace ratios. Members of the Planning staff will become involved with this initiatives at the earliest opportunity. Plan Commission approval may be required in some instances.

- **Application/Screening Phase** – During review of proposals, specific criteria could be applied to address potential impacts of development on the city’s greenspaces.
 - **Performance Systems** – Potentially a part of performance zoning (see above), performance systems use a point system to evaluate the actual effect of each development. Points are awarded for preservation of various greenspace criteria according to a standardized methodology. This review allows the developer a chance to mitigate any adverse effects and provides a more flexible range of acceptable developments than allowed under more restrictive zoning policies (Munich 6).
 - **Environmental Review** – The city could establish an ordinance requiring an environmental review before certain types of development can be undertaken. Less structured than a performance system, this review would require the developer to meet with city officials to discuss the possible adverse effects of the development plan as well as reasonable alternatives (Munich 7).
 - **Application Requirements** – Similar to the review procedures immediately above, application requirements will make clear to the developer whether developments can be denied if, after the application is reviewed, it is determined that the impact on greenspace is unacceptable. Applicants would be provided with greenspace information and maps of the property along with a checklist of the standards used to review applications. The applicant would then have to submit an analysis of the impacts of the development on greenspaces (Duerksen 31).
 - **Subdivision Review Standards** – In contrast to zoning regulations, subdivision approval standards address primarily the size and shape of lots that can be made available for development and the amount of infrastructure that must be installed before development can proceed. Although originally designed to protect consumers from the sale of substandard or undevelopable lots and to protect the public from low-quality development, subdivision standards have expanded to include many restrictions aimed at controlling the impacts of development. Many controls that could be included in zoning regulations can also be addressed in subdivision controls and vice versa (Duerksen 37).
 - **Development Agreements** – With development agreements, the city can use opportunities to protect quality greenspace through negotiations with individual landowners at the time when specific development proposals are brought forward. The city would enter into an agreement obligating both the city and the landowner to carry out certain actions in order to “vest” a preferred development plan for a period of time. Development agreements can give the landowner more certainty that the city will not act to delay or deny the development activity for a period longer than is defined in the statute. In return, the city can ask the landowner to design and operate the proposed development in ways that will protect or even enhance the existing greenspace on the property. Development agreements are negotiated on a project-by-project basis (Duerksen 47).
- **Building Requirements** – Developers could also be held to certain requirements that would actively preserve important greenspaces on the property.
 - **Mandatory Dedication** – Land dedications are conveyances of land from a private landowner to the local government, either voluntarily or to offset the anticipated

- impacts of a proposed development. Where new development creates a need for increased public services and infrastructure, this practice is intended to ensure that new development “pays its own way” by assuming these costs. The city could also accept fees in lieu of dedication to be committed toward preserving greenspace elsewhere. Legal precedents⁷ indicate that the city would need to establish a firm legal reasoning behind having either aspect of such program in place (Duerksen 46).
- **Mandatory Open Space** – Subdivision ordinances and other development ordinances may require the mandatory reservation of a certain percentage of the development as greenspace. This mechanism can be used to ensure that an adequate amount of greenspace is available at the time of development. Current PUD regulations require reservation of open space, but requirements could be made more stringent (Munich 5).
 - **Cluster Development** – Clustering provides flexibility for developers to construct buildings in clusters while remaining within the constraints of overall average density restrictions. Under cluster development, maximum densities are calculated not for individual lots, but for overall development areas. Rather than requiring uniform intervals between building sites, such ordinances often waive minimum lot size and dimension requirements to allow tight clusters of buildings in some areas, with other portions of the parcel set aside for open space or habitat use (Duerksen 40).
 - **Conservation Design for Subdivisions** – Under conservation design principles, which differs from traditional cluster development, full density is achievable only when at least 50 percent of potentially buildable land is set aside. Cluster provisions frequently require that only 25 to 30 percent of *gross* land be conserved, and often this land is comprised of leftover, undesirable areas. Conservation design can go so far as to protect blocks and corridors of permanent opens space. Target areas for future development should be pre-identified so that each new development will add to—rather than subtract from—the city’s open space acreage. Conservation-designed subdivisions would also make it easier for the city to implement a community-wide greenway plan by allowing critical linkages along streams and ridges (Arendt, “Growing” 7). Additionally, conservation design is “tax-neutral” because it changes neither the number of houses nor the total acreage assessed (Arendt, *Rural* 236).
 - **Limited Development** – Limited development involves dividing the land into a smaller number of higher-priced lots (10 to 30 acres), with permanent conservation restrictions in areas outside of designated “building envelopes” on each lot. A smaller percentage of the overall development would be required to be set aside, with additional greenspace coming from individual lots (Arendt, *Conservation* 23).
- **Development Bonus** – Bonuses would be incentives that directly or indirectly affect the developer when a higher density is used throughout a development.
 - **Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)** – Through a TDR, density transfers serve as an incentive to developers. They involve the shifting of permissible development densities from unsuitable development areas to more appropriate sites—in this case from important greenspace areas to less important areas. Under this concept, the city studies and designates appropriate “sending” and “receiving” areas on a map. A participating landowner in a sending area then transfers development rights to another landowner in a receiving area, who increases his or her development rights in that

⁷ *Dolan v. City of Tigard*, 114 U.S. 2309 (1994)

- area beyond what would otherwise be possible. TDR systems help alleviate pressures and incentives to subdivide or develop land by offering some means for landowners to recoup property values while maintaining low-density land uses (Duerksen 40).
- **Density Exchange Option (DEO)** – A variation of TDR, this option would reward cooperation resulting in the relocation of potential subdivisions away from areas where they would otherwise interrupt or separate adjoining farm parcels. The incentive for the landowner is that he or she is entitled to receive value based on a density upgrade (e.g., one dwelling per three acres, rather than one dwelling per five acres). The incentive for the owner of the “receiving” parcel are provided by allowing him or her to develop at a higher density (Arendt, *Rural* 303).
 - **Density Bonuses** – In this very common program, the city would offer landowners a chance to construct more residential or commercial development on their land if they will take certain actions to promote greenspace. The amount of additional development density allowed could vary depending on the importance and difficulty of the landowner’s actions to promote greenspace, but bonuses are commonly in the range of 25 to 50 percent (Duerksen 40).
- **Development Penalty** – Penalties can be issued when the development will adversely affect greenspace on the parcel in an effort to encourage the developer to alter plans.
 - **Density Penalties** – Density penalties can be employed when developers squander land in large-lot plats. When standard large-lot zoning will result in the fragmentation of greenspace resources, lower densities are allowed to keep fragmentation a minimum. In this way, the city would be encouraging higher-density cluster development (Arendt, *Rural* 231).
 - **Impact Fees** – When the authority to collect impact fees is present, such programs collect pro rata fees from different landowners, pool them, and then use them to purchase greenspace. Since impact fees reduce the required tax burden, they can be popular with taxpayers. Funds must be spent in a timely and appropriate manner to remain within the confines of the law (Duerksen 46).
 - **Other**
 - **Landowner Compacts** – This approach enables owners of adjoining properties to plan their separate landholdings as a single entity in order to achieve broader conservation objectives, while also designing the total potential development in a more logical and intelligent manner than could be achieved on a parcel-by-parcel basis. Used with cluster or open space design principles, landowners enjoy a percentage of proceeds equal to the level of permitted development on their land before the compact is formed (Arendt, *Rural* 242).
 - **Brownfield/Infill Development Program** – A program designed to encourage development on vacant properties within the city is also a form of greenspace preservation. When developers can be convinced that properties with existing infrastructure will meet their needs, their intrusion into greenspace becomes unnecessary (Lexington 80).

PASSIVE PRESERVATION PROGRAMS

Passive preservation programs are programs that do not exist to actively seek permanent greenspace preservation. Generally, they are non-binding and subject to the whim of the landowners. However, while passive programs are in place, the city can work on programs to

acquire greenspace in perpetuity and on obtaining funding. Public outreach and education will contribute to successes in this area.

- **Notification Program** – A notification program involves the notification of landowners, by letter or personal contact, of the significant natural resources (wetlands, karst features, etc.) present on their property in hopes that they will voluntarily maintain this greenspace. The program may also include counseling on the importance of the area and proper management techniques (Munich 1).
- **Recognition Program** – Going one step further than a notification program, recognition programs offer public acknowledgement of landowners for working to maintain their greenspace. Such public recognition may deter the landowner from undertaking development of the property. By initiating such a relationship with the landowner, the city may be able to persuade them in the future to donate easements (Munich 2).
- **Non-Binding Agreement Program** – This voluntary program provides a written agreement between the landowner and the city. The landowner agrees not to disturb the significant features of the property but is under no obligation and may withdraw from the agreement at any time he or she wishes to sell or develop the land (Munich 2).
- **Temporary Binding Agreements** – These programs go beyond the voluntary agreement to provide greenspace protection for a limited time. The city can then seek out other means of acquiring the land in perpetuity (Munich 2).
 - **Management Agreement** – The owner enters into a binding agreement to care for the land in a certain manner for a specified period of time. This agreement may or may not include compensation.
 - **Management Lease** – Under a lease program, the city leases the land (or even just the development rights) so that it can control specified management practices for a specified period of time. A management lease has the benefit of providing complete control, but it also results in a cost to the organization.
 - **Loans and Grants** – The city provides a grant or loan to be applied toward the proper management of the property. Terms of eligibility for city funding would include preservation of greenspace areas on the parcel(s).
- **Right-to-Farm Laws** – This type of legislation, were it enacted in Indiana, seeks to protect the operation of a farm from nuisance claims generated by the proximity of urban development and restricts local governments from enacting any ordinances declaring a farming operation to be a nuisance. In areas where development encroaches on traditionally farmed areas, a local version of this legislation could encourage farmers to continue current uses of their land rather than sell out to developers for fear of being sued later (Lexington 54).
- **Differential Taxation/Use Assessments** – Where potential profits may motivate landowners to convert low-density land uses to higher intensities or to convert important greenspace into intensive development areas, preferential tax programs can counter these motives by providing incentives to maintain existing low-intensity uses. Current use assessments alter assessment practices by requiring assessments to reflect actual current uses rather than prospective potential uses, thereby providing tax relief to landowners who choose to continue agricultural or other low-density uses that are consistent with the city's greenspace goals. Another application of current use assessments would allow landowners to contract with the city to restrict the use of their property through easement or deed restriction in return for a decreased assessed value on the property. Terms of

each agreement may vary, and there is a chance none will be established in perpetuity (Duerksen 42, Munich 6).

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning programs are maintained at the local government level and require extensive thought and preparation. The city will need to work with landowners and nearby governments to establish agreeable boundaries and districts to be affected.

- **Urban Growth Boundaries** – The use of growth boundaries allows cities to guide new development patterns by directing urban services to some areas and withholding them from others. In particular, the city could ensure that those boundaries do not include sensitive greenspace areas. If they do, the city may want to rethink where it wants to install infrastructure so as to avoid greenspace areas it wants to protect (Duerksen 38).
- **Targeted Growth Strategies** – Similar to growth boundaries, targeted growth designates development areas to which new growth is targeted within a region to reduce development in large areas of a county or region where greenspace areas exist. In general, targeted growth arrangements cannot be effective as greenspace preservation tools unless they involve the cooperation of the county government or regional planning area (Duerksen 39).
- **Capital Improvements Planning** – The city can also incorporate greenspace preservation goals into its capital improvements programs and budgets. Because a strong relationship exists between the presence of infrastructure and development of land, local governments can effectively discourage the development of greenspace areas by not planning for or budgeting for water, sewer lines, or roads in the area, and by discouraging the creation of special districts to finance those elements of infrastructure (Duerksen 39).
- **Growth Management Planning** – A more generalized form of the above planning strategies, growth management planning seeks to encourage the containment of population growth within the urban service area, thereby relieving development pressure on the rural service area. Incentives and coordination with principles established in the GPP could be combined to create such a plan (Lexington 52).

SECTION V FUNDING SOURCES

CITY/COUNTY OPERATING BUDGETS

Where money is available for existing programs, funds could be applied toward greenspace acquisition measures. Many cities include greenspace preservation as a part of their annual budgets, while others have successfully championed referenda that allow such fund dedication. Other municipalities create additional funds through tax income. Examples include:

- **Dedicated local sales tax** – Has been successful in Boulder, CO, and Crested Butte, MT. Larimer County, CO, recently adopted by referendum an 8-year, one-quarter percent local sales tax.
- **Property tax increase** – Local jurisdictions have successfully raised local property taxes, from which additional revenues were dedicated to preserving and maintaining greenspace.
- **Real estate transfer tax** – Crested Butte, MT, and the State of Maryland have each initiated a real estate transfer tax, the proceeds from which go toward funding the preservation of open space.
- **Tourism tax** – A “tourism tax” has been implemented in many towns with a high rate of tourism to capture extra income from visitors.
- **Bed, Board, and Booze (BBB) tax** – Flagstaff, AZ, adopted their BBB tax to capture income from their visitors.
- **Cigarette tax** – The State of Pennsylvania enacted a cigarette tax to guarantee a source of funding for open space acquisition.
- **Customer donation program** – This voluntary type of program was begun by citizens groups in Montana with an interest in preserving open space.
- **AgTIFs** – Marginal revenue generated from increasing property values after designating farmland as TIF (Tax-Increment Financing) districts has been used in Elkhart County, IN, to purchase easements on the same parcels of land (Indiana 7).
- **State lottery proceeds** – At the state level, both Colorado and Minnesota distribute funds to local governments for purpose of greenspace acquisition and preservation.

Additionally, the Trust for Public Land maintains its Public Finance Program to work with citizens groups, elected officials, and public agencies to craft, pass, and implement public finance measures for conservation. Services are offered in the areas of Feasibility Assessment, Measure Development (identification of appropriate sources), and Campaign Management. More information is available at www.tpl.org/tech.

Options available in this category of financing will depend heavily, of course, on what actions a city within Indiana is authorized to undertake.

DEBT FINANCING

Where the city is willing to increase its bond debt in order to begin a serious greenspace acquisition effort, the following sources are among options available. The implications of taking on more debt, however, often include additional taxation and should be weighed against direct taxation methods as described above.

Better America Bonds

Environmental Protection Agency

Contact: www.epa.gov/bonds/

Description: Beginning in the year 2000, local governments can apply to the EPA for the right to issue Better America Bonds. Qualifying purposes include: acquisition of land for open space, wetlands, public parks, or greenways; construction of visitor facilities in connection with above acquisition; remediation of land acquired above or other lands by planting trees or other vegetation, creating settling ponds to control runoff, undertaking reasonable measures to control erosion or protect endangered species, and remediating conditions caused by the prior disposal of toxic or other waste; acquisition of easements that prevent commercial development and any substantial change in use or character of the land; and environmental assessment and remediation of contaminated property—brownfields—owned by state or local governments due to abandonment by prior owner.

General Obligation Bonds

Description: Within the limits of its authority, the city can issue GO bonds to finance capital improvements and other projects. In the absence of available grant funds and targeted bond opportunities, additional funding to purchase greenspace could be obtained by issuing GO bonds.

Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Contact: Eleanor Granger, HUD, (317) 226-5293

Description: Section 108 enables Community Development Block Grant grantees to obtain federally guaranteed loans to enhance feasibility of large economic development projects. Projects must meet CDBG requirements and can include property acquisition, reconstruction/rehabilitation of housing and other property, construction of public facilities and other improvements, assistance to for-profit businesses for special economic development activities, site preparation/environmental site assessment and remediation, demolition and clearance of property, and rehabilitation of public real property.

AVAILABLE GRANT FUNDING

Ideally, the city will be able to work with not-for-profits and public agencies to target available applicable grant opportunities. Grants would prove to be an ideal source of funding, above raising taxes and taking on long-term debt, but competition is high for many grants aimed at preserving greenspace and other conservation efforts. The following list, while not exhaustive, includes a number of opportunities that could fund direct land acquisition, establishment of a greenway system, and support programs to accompany the city's greenspace program.

LAND ACQUISITION

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Indiana Department of Natural Resources, through the National Park Service

Contact: Pat Malone, Indiana Division of Outdoor Recreation, (317) 232-4070

Award Cycle: No funds available for FY99. Potential for congressional authorization for FY00. Contact for more information.

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible Projects: Land acquisition and/or facility construction or renovation for outdoor recreation; for any new or renovated park and/or outdoor recreational area such as the development of lakes, trails, and interpretive facilities.

Funding: \$10,000 - \$100,000, 50% non-federal match required

Applicability: If funding is available in the future, the city could acquire land to improve the existing parks system or expand it into new areas.

Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program

National Park Service

Contact: Bob Anderson, National Park Service, Midwest Region, (402) 221-3358

Award Cycle: No funds for FY99. Potential for FY00. Call for more information.

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible Projects: Rehabilitation of urban recreational facilities. Jurisdiction must maintain a current Recovery Action Program plan approved by NPS.

Funding: No amount specified, dollar-for-dollar match required.

Applicability: Does Bloomington maintain a Recovery Action Program plan? If so, city parks could benefit from this program.

Hometown Indiana Grant Program

IDNR

Contact: Pat Malone, Indiana Division of Outdoor Recreation, (317) 232-4074

Award Cycle: Applications available December 1999, with a deadline of March 1, 2000.

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible Projects: Acquisition and/or development of recreation sites and facilities, including greenways and natural areas. Can be for any new or renovated park and/or outdoor recreational area such as lakes, trails, and playgrounds. Cities must have an up-to-date five-year parks and recreation master plan or a comprehensive plan that includes parks and recreation.

Funding: \$10,000 - \$200,000, requires a 50% local match.

Applicability: As long as the city has a parks and recreation plan, this grant could be used to extend or reinvigorate the current park system.

Indiana Waters

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Contact: Pat Malone, Division of Outdoor Recreation, (317) 232-4070

Award Cycle: Vary depending on federal appropriations.

Eligible Applicants: Parks Board only.

Eligible Projects: Land acquisition and/or facility development for fishing/boating access. Any new or renovated park and/or outdoor recreational lakes and rivers that provide access to boating and fishing would be eligible.

Funding: \$10,000 and up (no cap), requires a 50% match.

Applicability: Need to coordinate with Parks and Rec if relevant to city's needs.

Conservation Reserve Program

US Department of Agriculture

Contact: Farm Service Agency
www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/capd/crpinfo.htm

Eligible Applicants: Individual farmers

Eligible Projects: Cropland that is planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity during two of the five most recent crop years or certain marginal pastureland enrolled in the Water Bank Program. Other requirements apply.

Funding: Rental rates vary by property.

Applicability. The city could act to identify any applicable lands

Wetlands Reserve Program

US Department of Agriculture

Contact: Natural Resources Conservation Service
www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/OPA/FB96OPA/WRPfact.html

Award Cycle: Continuous sign-up

Eligible Applicants: Individual landowners

Eligible Projects: Permanent easements, 30-year easements, and restoration cost-share agreements (minimum 10-year duration) will be funded by USDA on approved lands.

Funding: Full cost for permanent easements, 75% of costs for 30-year easements, and 75% of restoration costs in a restoration cost-share agreement.

Applicability: The city could work to identify and assist eligible landowners.

Farmland Protection Program

US Department of Agriculture

Contact: Robert L. Eddleman, Indiana NRSC Office, (317) 290-3200

Award Cycle: Listed in the *Federal Register*.

Eligible Applicants: Any local or state agency, county or groups of counties, municipality, town or township, soil and water conservation district, or Native American tribe or tribal organization. Must have a farmland protection program in place to purchase conservation easements for the purpose of protecting topsoil by limiting conversion to non-agricultural use, and must have pending offers.

Eligible Projects: Purchase of conservation easements on farmland.

Funding: \$100,000 to \$1,900,000 per cooperating entity, average of \$387,162.

Applicability: If farmland is identified, this program could be an excellent opportunity for the city to obtain funding.

Forest Legacy Program

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Contact: Dan Ernst, Division of Forestry, (317) 232-4101, dernst@dnr.state.in.us
<http://www.state.in.us/dnr/forestry/htmldocs/legacy.htm>

Award Cycle: June 1 deadline in year desired for consideration

Eligible Applicants: Individual landowners

Eligible Projects: Purchase of development rights for environmentally important forests.

Funding: Up to 75% of purchase price

Applicability: If eligible owners were identified, the city could expand its greenspace network.

Kresge Foundation Grants

The Kresge Foundation

Contact: Program Officer, The Kresge Foundation, (248) 643-9630

Award Cycle:

Eligible Applicants: Tax-exempt charitable organizations operating in the fields of higher education, health care and long-term care, social services, science and the environment, arts and humanities, and public affairs.

Eligible Projects: Supports construction and/or renovation of facilities, purchase of major capital equipment or an integrated system at a cost of at least \$75,000, and acquisition of real estate.

Funding:

Applicability: Projects given consideration probably need to be developed beyond just “buying land for greenspace.”

GREENWAYS GRANTS

Kodak American Greenways Grants

Eastman Kodak, with The Conservation Fund and the National Geographic Society

Contact: American Greenways Coordinator, The Conservation Fund, (703) 525-6300
www.conservationfund.org/conservation/amgreen

Award Cycle: 1999 cycle is over, but 2000 cycle has yet to begin.

Eligible Applicants: Public agencies may apply, but community organizations (local, regional, or state nonprofits) receive preference.

Eligible Projects: Grants can be used for all appropriate expenses needed to complete a greenway project including planning, technical assistance, legal, and other costs. Grants may

not be used for academic research, general institutional support, lobbying, or political activities.

Funding: Generally \$500-\$1000, but maximum is \$2500, no matching requirement

Applicability: Grant is small, but does not require any matching funds. If a greenway linkage program is initiated, then this would be a good, albeit small, opportunity. Thirty-five were awarded last year.

Recreational Trails Program

US Dept. of Transportation, administered by IDNR

Contact: Pat Malone, Indiana Division of Outdoor Recreation, (317) 232-4070

Award Cycle: Available February 2000 with a deadline of May 01, 2000.

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible Projects: Development of multi-use trails, both motorized and non-motorized, including the acquisition of easements or property for trails. Provides for land acquisition and/or development of multi-purpose trails.

Funding: \$10,000 - \$100,000, requires a 25% local match.

Applicability: Could contribute to the development of a comprehensive trails system for the city since it provides for land acquisition.

TRANSPORTATION GRANTS

Livable Communities Initiative

Federal Transit Administration, US Department of Transportation

Contact: FTA Region V (312) 353-2789

Award Cycle:

Eligible Applicants: Transit operators, metropolitan planning organizations, city and county governments, states, planning agencies, and public bodies with authority to plan or construct transit projects.

Eligible Projects: Preparation of implementation designs incorporating Livable Communities elements; the assessment of environmental, social, economic, land use, and urban design impacts of projects; feasibility studies; technical assistance; participation by community organizations and the business community, including small and minority-owned businesses, and persons with disabilities; evaluation of best practices; and the development of innovative urban design, land use, and zoning practices.

Funding: Funded through TEA-21

Applicability: Funds programs that link residents more directly to available public transit. Could be used toward a greenway/trails system designed to link pedestrians to public transit. Guidelines are stringent.

Transportation Enhancement Grants

Indiana Department of Transportation

Contact: Mike Helton, INDOT (317) 232-5224

Award Cycle: October 1999 deadline

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible Projects: Transportation enhancements are transportation-related activities designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of an intermodal transportation system. To be considered projects must include one or more of the following characteristics: provision of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians; acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites; scenic or historic highway programs; landscaping and other scenic beautification; historic preservation; rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities; preservation of abandoned railway corridors; control and removal of outdoor advertising; archaeological planning and research; environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highway runoff or reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity; provision of safety and educational activities for bicyclists and pedestrians; and establishment of transportation museums.

Funding: Through TEA-21, requires a 20% match.

Applicability: Would align easily with the city's goals in linking greenspace network through greenways.

Transportation and Community System Preservation Program

TEA-21

Contact:

Award Cycle: July 1999 deadline

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible Activities: Planning of implementation of programs designed to improve the efficiency of the transportation system; reduce impacts of transportation on the environment; reduce the need for costly future public infrastructure investments; ensure efficient access to jobs, services, and centers of trade; and examine and encourage private sector development patterns that meet these purposes.

Funding:

Applicability: If a proposed greenway system actively improves pedestrian access, then this grant may be a long-shot.

Transit Enhancements

FTA, through TEA-21

Contact: FTA Region V, (312) 353-2789

Award Cycle:

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible Projects: Historic preservation, rehabilitation, and operation of historic mass transportation buildings, structures, and facilities; bus shelters; landscaping and other scenic beautification, including tables, benches, trash receptacles, and street lights; public art; pedestrian access and walkways; bicycle access, including bicycle storage facilities and installing equipment for transporting bicycles on mass transportation vehicles; transit connections to parks with the recipient's transit services area; signage; and enhanced access for persons with disabilities to mass transportation.

Funding: Requires 50% local match.

Applicability: Both pedestrian walkways and connectivity of park system to transit sites are potential uses.

SUPPORTIVE PROGRAMS

Sustainable Development Challenge Grant

EPA

Contact: Janette Marsh, EPA Region V (312) 886-4856

Description: For projects promoting environmentally and economically sustainable development that can be replicated in other communities.

Section 319 Nonpoint Source Water Management Grant

Indiana Department of Environmental Management

Contact: Doug Campbell, Office of Water Management, (317) 233-8491,
dcampbell@dem.state.in.us

Description: Grant used to implement projects or programs that will help reduce non-point sources of water pollution within priority watersheds, such as implementation of non-point source best management practices, stream bank repair, wetlands restoration, and implementation of polluted runoff management projects.

205j Grants (Previously 604b Grants)

IDEM

Contact: Brett Wineinger, Office of Water Management, (317) 233-8282,
bwine@dem.state.in.us

Description: Projects must address water quality issues and focus on planning, GIS, etc. No construction activities are funded. The Griffy Grant secured by the city is a 205j Grant

104(b)(3) Grants

IDEM

Contact: Brett Wineinger, Office of Water Management, (317) 233-8282,
bwine@dem.state.in.us

Description: Similar to 205j Grants, but less restrictive in that they allow construction projects and design of construction projects.

Five-Star Restoration Challenge Grants

Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation

Contact: Abigail Friedman, National Association of Counties, (202)393-6226,
afriedma@naco.org
Tom Kelsch, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, (202)857-0166, kelsch@nfwf.org
Andrew Moore, National Assoc. of Service & Conservation Corps, (202)737-6272,
amoore@nascc.org
Jeff Brinck, Wildlife Habitat Council, (301)588-8994, jbrinck@wildlifehc.org

Description: For restoration projects that involve contributions from multiple and diverse partners. Projects must have strong habitat restoration component that provides long-term ecological, educational, and/or socio-economic benefits to the people and their community. Grant is very modest amount.

Economic Development Initiative (EDI)

HUD

Contact: Eleanor Granger, HUD, (317) 226-5293
SuperNOFA Information Center, 1-800-HUD-8929

Description: Grants are used by local governments to enhance the security of Section 108 Loans and the feasibility of projects they finance.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Mitigation Assistance Grants

FEMA

Contact: FEMA Chicago Regional Office or FEMA Mitigation Directorate (202) 646-4621
www.fema.gov/home/MIT/fmasst.htm

Description: Provides planning grants to assist communities with development of flood mitigation plans and project grants for implementation of planned measures to reduce flood losses. Communities must have Flood Mitigation Plans to be eligible for project grants, which support dry flood-proofing; elevation, relocation, acquisition, or demolition of insured structures; erosion control; and drainage improvements.

Community Planning Fund

Indiana Department of Commerce

Contact: Mary Beth Schmucker/Kate Sipes, Community Development Division (317) 232-5296

Description: Encourages long-range community planning. Helps defray the cost of economic development strategies, target area studies, capital improvement plans, and feasibility studies.

Stewardship Incentive Program

US Department of Agriculture

Contact: Dan Ernst, Indiana Division of Forestry, (317) 232-4105, dernst@dnr.state.in.us

Description: Provides technical and financial assistance to encourage forest landowners to keep their lands and natural resources productive and healthy. Eligible landowners must have an approved Forest Stewardship Plan and own 1000 or fewer acres of qualifying land. Not to be used for purchase of land or easements.

USDA Resource Conservation and Development

US Department of Agriculture

Contact: Robert L. Eddleman, Indiana NRSC Office, (317) 290-3200

Description: Focuses on improvement of quality of life through natural resource conservation and community development; prudent use (development), management, and conservation of natural resources; social, economic, and environmental improvement; local leadership providing program decision making; and strengthening of citizens' abilities to utilize available sources of assistance through USDA agency partnerships.

Conservation Technical Assistance

US Department of Agriculture

Contact: Robert L. Eddleman, Indiana NRSC Office, (317) 290-3200

Description: To assist land-users, communities, units of state and local government, and other federal agencies in planning and implementing conservation systems to reduce erosion, improve soil and water quality, improve and conserve wetlands, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve air quality, improve pasture and range condition, reduce upstream flooding, and improve wetlands.

REI Grant Program

REI

Contact: REI Public Affairs, publicaffairs@rei.com
www.rei.com

Description: The company sponsors a grant program related to recreation and open space. Public Affairs said information would be on-line by the end of 1999.

NEA New Public Works Grants

National Endowment for the Arts

Contact: Susan Begley, Information Management Division (202) 682-5452

Description: Design competition meant to make communities more livable. Promotes excellence in design in the public realm in areas including planning, architecture and interior design, landscape architecture, industrial design, and graphic design. Projects may include competitions for master plans; public building design; or landscape design, reclamation, or restoration. Only not-for-profit, tax-exempt organizations may apply.

BROWNFIELDS GRANTS

Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Site Assessment Grants

EPA

Contact: Jim Van der Kloot, EPA Region V Brownfields Coordinator, (312) 353-3161
Linda Morgan, EPA Region V Brownfields Project Manager, (312) 886-4747

Description: To encourage stakeholders in economic redevelopment to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. Establishes planning models for brownfields cleanup redevelopment, and leverages private investment for brownfields cleanup and redevelopment.

Brownfields Site Assessment Grants

Indiana Development Finance Authority

Contact: Greta Hawvermale, Brownfields Program Manager, IDFA, (317) 233-9799

Description: For site assessment purposes only. Priority to communities having completed Phase I Assessment.

Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI)

HUD

Contact: Eleanor Granger, HUD, (317) 226-5293
SuperNOFA Information Center, 1-800-HUD-8929

Description: Designed to help cities redevelop abandoned, idled, or underutilized industrial and commercial facilities designated as brownfields. Eligible activities include site acquisition, demolition, remediation, infrastructure construction or reconstruction, assistance to for-profit businesses for economic development, construction or reconstruction of public facilities.

MEETING MATCH REQUIREMENTS

Many grants require some level of matching to be indicated on the initial application. In each case, in-kind dollars can be obtained in a variety of ways, including:

- Direct allocation of city resources
- Relevant municipal employees' salaries
- Market Cost of donated land
- Labor hours contributed by volunteers
- Consultant services, donated or paid for by city
- Surveying services, donated or paid for by city
- Supplies for construction, donated or paid for by city
- Contract labor, donated or paid for by city

SECTION VI MAINTENANCE OF GREENSPACE

Once funding is secured and greenspace areas are actually acquired, maintenance of those greenspace areas will require the involvement of many actors in the comprehensive plan. Depending on the categorization of each site, various “stewards” will be charged with overseeing their portion of the network, with all properties coordinated by the body given responsibility for the greenspace plan. The following are categories likely to evolve through this plan:

- **Lands currently under stewardship** – Property in this category includes lands already a part of an existing network that is being maintained by the current owners or stewards. For example, the Parks and Recreation Department oversees all recreational areas within the city over which they maintain authority. Parks and Rec would therefore remain in charge of maintaining these areas. Their liaison to the greenspace plan would coordinate their departmental efforts with the overall goals and priorities of the city. In the same way, Sycamore Land Trust properties would continue to be maintained in their usual fashion, in coordination with the greenspace plan.
- **Lands acquired by greenspace not-for-profit** – In the case of property acquired by any newly formed greenspace not-for-profit organizations, a method for stewardship would have to be enacted for each individual property. In the case of land obtained and transferred to either land trust or Parks and Rec ownership, the accepting body would be charged with maintaining the property. Lands to be held by the not-for-profit would need to rely on volunteer efforts by the organization or other contracted parties to maintain the area and ensure that it was being preserved as open space and was not being subjected to unauthorized land uses.
- **Properties acquired/owned by city or county** – Properties held by the city or county would require oversight by the respective government body. Government maintenance personnel could be charged with the upkeep of newly acquired properties according to city/county policies regarding such issues. With greenspace as a new priority for the city, a subsection of the available labor force could be dedicated to greenspace upkeep, and city staff could be charged with overseeing each site to ensure that land was being used only in ways that had been agreed upon previously.
- **Future development “set-asides”** – Greenspaces resulting from future developments have been maintained by many different routes in the past in other areas. In many cases, homeowners associations, when they exist, take responsibility for the green areas and oversee their upkeep with annual dues. In some cases, the private developer retains oversight responsibility and usually hires professional caretakers. In fewer cases, the land (or an easement) is simply signed over to the local government and is incorporated as a part of their land responsibility. If the reserved property is ecologically eligible, a land trust has been known to accept stewardship in exchange for the easement rights.

SECTION VII PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public outreach will be broken down into two main categories: greenspace education and land solicitation. Educational outreach will focus on showing the citizens of Bloomington that there is a real need for greenspace preservation and that a successful Greenspace Plan will bring a number of benefits to the city and to them as taxpayers and residents. Land solicitation will revolve around gaining landowners' voluntary cooperation with increasing the City and County's dedicated greenspace. Demonstration projects can be undertaken to show that not only is this Plan possible, but it is also feasible and even beneficial.

EDUCATION

NEED FOR PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Clearly, as Bloomington grows larger and more development is invited to take place, the city is losing opportunities to preserve what greenspace remains. A proactive educational effort will be required to present and interpret the Greenspace Plan to the public. Successful implementation of the Plan relies upon building a strong base of public support. Greenspace preservation should be shown to be not a luxury, but rather a necessity if residents want to maintain a high quality of life.

Details about the Plan need to be shared and open meetings need to be held so that citizens have access to information and staff involved with the Plan. A mini-conference could be held where speakers from communities with successful plans explain the process that they went through to reach the point where they are today. Tours could be conducted through Bloomington's current greenspace, and participants could trace out their own trail from one parcel to another, so that they could see firsthand how greenway linkage would benefit the overall system.

Education will also need to be conducted within the government itself and with organizations set to take part in the process. The goals of the Plan must be incorporated somehow into the overriding missions of everyone involved so that there is no contradiction and so that everyone is behind the program (Lexington 83).

BENEFITS

Economic Benefits – To City

Potential economic benefits to the city are numerous, and a benefit-cost analysis of situations requiring direct investment by the city might be in order to determine the feasibility of each investment.

- **Attractiveness to Businesses** – Greenspace has shown in many cases to bring added economic benefits to communities, particularly those desiring the location of business and industry. Corporate CEOs say that quality of life for employees is the third most important factor when considering locations for their businesses, behind only access to domestic markets and availability of skilled labor. Additionally, owners of small companies ranked recreation/parks/open space as the highest priority in choosing a new

location for their business (Lerner 13). The relocation of businesses would obviously bring jobs and an increased revenue stream to the area.

- **Contributions to Tourism** – As an extension of Bloomington’s natural beauty, preserved greenspace would add to the current inventory of parks and recreational areas, as well as to the scenic opportunities already available in the more rural parts of the city and county. Increased tourism would mean an increase in revenue brought into the city.
- **Increased Property Values** – Communities like Boulder, Colorado, have proven that greenspace preservation is a one-time investment that can boost property values long after the land is paid for. In one neighborhood, total property value increased by \$5.4 million after a greenbelt was built there, generating \$500,000 per year in additional property taxes—enough to recoup the greenway’s \$1.5 million purchase cost in only three years (Lerner 12).
- **Increased Profitability of Adjacent Commercial Areas** – Increases in travelers along greenways and to greenspaces could result in higher profits for both merchants and the city. In Dunnedin, Florida, for example, after the Pinellas Trail was built through town, store vacancy rates dropped from 35% to zero. And a study in Maryland found that while the 20-mile Northern Central Rail Trail near Baltimore cost \$191,893 to maintain and operate in 1993, it returned \$304,000 the same year in state and local taxes (Lerner 26).
- **Lower Infrastructure Costs** – Sprawl development not only consumes more land than high-density development, it requires more tax-supported infrastructure such as roads and sewer lines. Police and fire services and schools also must be distributed over a wider area. Clustered housing and other sprawl-limiting initiatives are cheaper for the city to service, largely because they would consume less land and require shorter roads, shorter utility lines and less infrastructure of other types (Lerner 7). A reduced cost to the city would also result in a lower tax burden to be passed on to citizens.
- **Higher Bond Rating** – According to one New York county,⁸ a community’s bond rating may actually increase after it has shown it can control growth by purchasing open space (Lerner 10). Of course, the bond rating process varies greatly from city to city, but the instance of even a single increase with preserved open space as a factor demonstrates that there are perceived financial benefits to preserving greenspace.

Economic Benefits – To Citizens

In addition to the potential tax savings mentioned above, residents of Bloomington may see other economic benefits as well. Such benefits would occur without any action on their part, and would simply be positive side effects resulting from the city’s investment in greenspace.

- **Increased Real Estate Values** – One 1998 real estate industry analysis predicts that over the next 25 years, real estate values will rise fastest in those communities that combine the traditional characteristics of successful cities: a concentration of amenities, an integration of residential and commercial districts, and a “pedestrian-friendly configuration.” By combining elements of cluster design with a network of greenspace, Bloomington will be recognized as one of these smarter communities, and residents will enjoy a higher valuation of their property (Lerner 10).
- **Lower Property Taxes** – While at first a decrease in property taxation may seem impossible, long-term results in Massachusetts reveal otherwise. Towns in the state that

⁸ Dutchess County. Holly L. Thomas, “The Economic Benefits of Land Conservation,” Dutchess County Planning Department Tech Memo, (Poughkeepsie, NY: 1991), 1.

had protected the most land enjoyed, on average, the lowest property taxes in the state—perhaps because they had less development, which then required fewer roads and schools, less sewer and water infrastructure, and less-intensive general services (Lerner 6). A 1997 investigation of the impact of Heritage Trust purchases on Indiana local governments revealed that even though the program had removed an estimated \$533,046 in assessed value from the tax rolls, the estimated average rate increase was \$0.00182. This would result in a \$0.38 annual tax bill increase for property with a market value of \$100,000. For 432 of 646 taxing districts in the state, there was no increase; and the highest increase was only \$0.0091 in Lake County (Agricultural ii).

- **Reduced Cost to Homebuyers** – Because developers will see lower costs in the development of cluster or open space design subdivisions, they may pass fewer costs onto homebuyers, resulting in a more affordable housing market. In the event individual housing prices do not go down, homebuyers will still be receiving more for their dollar based on the increased amount of greenspace in close proximity to their property (Arendt, *Conservation* 10).

Ecological/Environmental

Part of the added-value of having greenspace within a community are the natural services that such areas provide. Natural open space provides these services for free; in its absence, society must pay for them. By preserving green areas within and around the city, Bloomington will see many benefits.

- **Wildlife and Habitat Protection** – Urban growth results in the fragmentation and loss of natural wildlife habitat, and the process of urbanization will continue to alter the biological and physical components of existing ecosystems as development reaches into more and more natural areas. By limiting land development and preserving greenspace, the city will actively protect wildlife habitat and travel corridors (Duerksen 1).
- **Improved Air Quality** – By preserving tree cover in greenspace and urban areas, Bloomington will help maintain its identity as “Tree City USA.” Trees control erosion, help clean the air of pollutants, mitigate global warming by absorbing carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, and help shelter and cool our homes (Lerner 42).
- **Improved Water Quality** – Protecting watershed areas and wetlands could greatly reduce the amount of water pollution needing to be corrected. Wetlands serve as wildlife habitat, absorb storm and flood water, and reduce pollutant and sediment loads in watershed runoff (Lerner 42). Setting aside stream buffers will aid in the filtering of pollutants and nutrients from agricultural and residential runoff (Lerner 43).
- **Flood Plain Protection** – By limiting development in flood plain areas, the city could prevent damage from future flooding. While other parts of the United States are much more at risk, a protected floodplain in Bloomington would contain no property to be damaged and would act as a permanent “safety valve” for flooding, reducing destruction to developed areas downstream (Lerner 35).

Aesthetic/Quality of Life

In addition to the economic and environmental benefits of maintaining greenspace areas in the city, other benefits exist that may be much more obvious to the average citizen. While the aesthetic qualities of greenspace alone is enough to merit its preservation, the opportunities to actively utilize green areas are endless.

- **Aesthetics** – How enjoyable would the drive south into Bloomington on S.R. 37 be if there were no trees to turn colors in the fall? The preservation of greenspace areas ensures the continued enjoyment of the rural landscapes that are an integral part of Bloomington and Monroe County.
- **Increased Number of Parks and Recreational Opportunities** – Adding to Bloomington's extensive Parks and Recreation system would provide a number of additional opportunities for city residents. The park system could be expanded to areas currently without local parks, and smaller green areas could be designed as community pavillions to be enjoyed by residents of nearby neighborhoods.
- **Curtailed Loss of Urban Greenspace** – As the urban center of the city continues to expand outward, we lose the opportunity to maintain our green infrastructure. By preserving greenspace, however, we fashion a richer, greener, more complex infrastructure that makes the city a more appealing place to live and work (Lerner 6)
- **Improved Greenway/Trails Opportunities** – By establishing an extensive network of greenspace, linkage opportunities will also improve. Benefits will include greater access for pedestrians and a more pedestrian-friendly environment; more recreational opportunities for jogging, biking, and hiking; and adequate wildlife corridors for foraging and travel.

OTHER SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

Easily a hundred other successful programs have been set up around the United States. Either at the state or local level, voters are turning out to approve referenda that create dedicated funding sources for greenspace acquisition. Communities are taking the initiative to begin comprehensive planning that allows them to create a true network of greenspaces and/or greenways in their community. A few examples include:

Indianapolis Greenways System (Indianapolis, IN)

Begun in 1994, the Indianapolis Greenways System set about providing recreation and fitness opportunities, protecting important wildlife habitat, linking city neighborhoods, and educating the public about the importance of the natural environment. Greenway corridors were defined and now form a comprehensive network of interconnecting trails and paths that wend around the city along ecological assets like the White River and through important community areas like Broad Ripple.

The Roxborough Green Space Project (Roxborough, PA)

Formed in 1996, the Project strikes a balance between development and greenspace preservation. Having successfully mapped out the city's remaining open spaces, obtained ownership and zoning information, and identified important natural resources of each open site, the group is now establishing priorities, deciding which lands to protect and why, and then designating specific tracts for preservation, recreational use, or limited development.

City of Boulder Open Space Department (Boulder, CO)

Through sales tax revenues approved by referendum, bond issues, private donations, and development dedications, over 29,000 acres of land have been preserved and protected. Land is preserved for scenic and agricultural use and a buffer of protected open space around the city helps preserve Boulder's identity as unique from neighboring communities.

GreenSpace Alliance (Philadelphia, PA)

Bound together to help unify disjointed development activities and preserve open space through the use of zoning tools, community partnerships, and outreach efforts, five counties of the Philadelphia metropolitan region are working effectively to reduce the loss of open land. The Alliance's efforts are improving the quality of life, providing recreational opportunity, and linking people to the region's cultural and natural heritage.

Piedmont Green Plan (Charlotte, NC)

Dedicated to providing a regional, strategic assessment of recreational open space and land conservation needs for the rapidly growing 15-county metropolitan area around Charlotte, the Piedmont Green Plan began by first creating a computer model of projected land development patterns through the year 2020. This model, which showed a loss of open space at the rate of 41 acres per day, became the basis for an 18-month collaborative effort that began in July of 1998 and will serve as a strategic framework for both public and private land conservation planning efforts throughout the region.

Crested Butte Land Trust (Crested Butte, MT)

Formed under the auspices of the town from which it gained its name, the CBLT is supported by a real estate transfer tax and approved by voters in both the town and its surrounding county, as well as voluntary donations to store patrons in the name of open space preservation. In its eight years of existence the CBLT has grown to include over 500 members and works with county and city residents to help with estate planning and conservation easements

Marin Agricultural Land Trust (Marin County, CA)

Created in 1980 by a coalition of ranchers and environmentalists, MALT acts as a conservation alternative to the sale, subdivision, or development of important agricultural land. Over the past fifteen years, MALT has acquired conservation easements on 38 Marin County farms and ranches, permanently preserving 25,504 acres of land, comprising a full 20% of the privately owned agricultural land in Marin County.

Maryland's Program Open Space (State of Maryland)

Established by the state Department of Natural Resources in 1969, the Program symbolizes Maryland's long-term commitment to conserving natural resources while providing exceptional outdoor recreation opportunities. From neighborhood parks and wooded nature areas to historic sites and formal gardens, the Program provides funding for Maryland's state and local parks and conservation areas. Over 175,000 acres of open space have been protected since the program's inception.

Other programs identified include Lone County, Oregon; Sacramento, California; Tucson, Arizona; Phoenix, Arizona; and the Pennsylvania Land Trust.

LAND SOLICITATION

Land solicitation should begin with the education of private landowners as a target audience. Private property owners need information regarding what exactly a conservation easement is, for example, and what the advantages and disadvantages to them will be. Explaining the benefits listed near the beginning of this section, property owners should be informed of the financial, environmental, and quality of life aspects of greenspace preservation.

Land owners will be more comfortable working with task force staff if the education process begins with simple education about greenspace, with solicitation efforts set to follow. A letter should be drafted to all city and county property owners informing them of the benefits of preserved green space. Even the homeowner with only a small yardlet should be encouraged to “keep it green” in an effort to beautify and naturalize Bloomington and Monroe County. Owners of targeted properties, however, need to be asked to maintain their lands as greenspace voluntarily, through one of the passive mechanisms discussed in Section IV.

Once greenspace awareness is sufficient, individual owners can be approached about the possibility of donating easements to benefit the Plan. Failing a donation, landowners may wish to sell their easements, in which case the City should be fully prepared to put each parcel into perspective relative to the strategic plan. Even if a property remains out of the city’s hands after a valiant effort, it should be monitored in regards to its likelihood for development and changing land uses.

SECTION VIII RECOMMENDATIONS

INITIAL PROJECT SCOPE

Due to the amount of time required to complete certain aspects of the Initial Project Scope, all thirteen items could not be included in detail in this project draft. Those items not included are as follows:

3. *Consolidate all GPP policies that speak to open space, greenspace.*
The Growth Policies Plan has changed somewhat since it was created from the Master Plan in 1991. Appendix B should be consulted along with a current copy of the GPP to inventory all mentions of greenspace that are a part of Bloomington's growth plans. The GPP should then be amended as necessary to consolidate fragmented references and coordinate an official greenspace policy.
4. *Produce an environmentally sensitive land composite GIS map based on steep grades, karst features, streams, floodplains, tree cover, and other important flora/fauna information.*
Due to the complexity of this task, the need for coordination with the county, and a lack of access to much of the data, producing such a map will require a significant amount of time. Predictions by Laura Haley from the Bloomington GIS Department estimate that mapping will not be complete until sometime during late spring of 2000.
5. *Map current parks and pathways.*
This step is being completed in conjunction with step 4 above.
6. *Map current conservation areas.*
This step is being completed in conjunction with steps 4 and 5 above.
7. *Map large City and County owned properties.*
This step is being completed in conjunction with steps 4 through 6 above.
8. *Develop criteria for selected candidate greenspace areas.*
Using the information provided in Section III of this draft, the task force will need to develop a comprehensive grading and selection procedure for potential greenspace areas, based on city, county, and other greenspace priorities.
10. *Draft letter to property owners explaining conservation easement benefits and asking for voluntary granting of conservation easements.*
Once the Greenspace Plan has been formalized by the task force and goals have been created based on priorities, actual steps can be taken toward the procurement of dedicated lands.
11. *Identify linkage opportunities, including wildlife corridors and pathways.*
Based on the final GIS maps created in steps 4 through 7 above, ideal linkage opportunities should be targeted and incorporated into the overall greenspace strategy.

12. *Identify and coordinate with not-for-profit agencies to determine their capacity/willingness to be stewards for greenspace land.*

The Sycamore Land Trust has already expressed an interest in participating on the task force, and Kathleen Dowd-Gailey and Dan Willard each attended the December 7 planning meeting as Land Trust representatives. As the task force is formed, other not-for-profits should be contacted as to their interest in participating on the task force and/or their ability to serve as stewards (in the role of land owner or caretaker).

13. *Propose GPP/zoning regulations needed to implement the Greenspace Plan GS goals.*

Based on city priorities and goals established by the task force, city planning staff should investigate potential amendments to both zoning regulations and the current GPP. In an effort to keep the greenspace taskforce from becoming a political animal, this step may be deemed outside the scope of task force responsibility, or the task force may choose to act as an advisory body to the Bloomington and Monroe County Planning Departments.

CRITICAL NEXT STEP

Formation of the Greenspace Plan task force will be the critical next step if this Plan is to come into being. With the great number of interested parties and the need to balance city and county priorities, a body must be created to take on this responsibility. A discussion of the nature of this task force (political vs. apolitical) and of its status (501(c)(3) not-for-profit vs. non-incorporated advisory board) is in order.

Then, utilizing the information summarized in this report, members of the Greenspace Plan can begin to further develop the visions of County Councilman Mark Stoops and the Bloomington Planning Department in an effort to create and implement a formal City-County Greenspace Plan.

SECTION IX WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY

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